

The Venus Project is sorry to hear of an article published in the magazine "Spirit of the Times", where the editor, graphic designer and web administrator are from a Zeitgeist Movement official chapter. The Magazine is available for purchase through a Zeitgeist Movement official website and sells for \$5.00 and \$8.00 for a hard copy. The article is titled "Debunking The Venus Project" by David Zwolski, a national coordinator and a spokesperson of the Australian Chapter of The Zeitgeist Movement. It's sad to hear that someone who claims to have advocated The Venus Project knew so little about The Venus Project or Jacque Fresco. While we would normally ignore the kind of low grade attacks, accusations, and opinions he generates here, we do not have the luxury of being so passive with the high level of libel being published in this magazine. We will therefore ignore most of the article for what it is, baseless personal opinions which are irrelevant to The Venus Project and Jacque Fresco. We will instead focus directly on the items which are slanderous lies. Herein, the following statements are made:

The most recent example of their exploitation of their supporters was their pocketing of 113 thousand dollars of donations that were donated to further "step 2" of their flawless plan – the release of a major motion picture^[9]. The money was originally intended for a professional scriptwriter for this movie, and donations were solicited under this pretext. Initially the target was set at one million dollars, and later reduced to \$100,000. Despite going significantly above target in donations received, the Venus Project then announced that they now plan write the script themselves. To make a fair comparison, this is akin to donating \$100,000 to a specific charity campaign, and then seeing the money diverted from that campaign – the reason you saw merit in making the donation in the first place – into an unknown and unannounced alternative venture.

This is an utterly false accusation. How he can present such a speculative statement as fact is a mystery. All funds donated for the movie went directly to the non-profit organization "Future by Design", which is an official NPO 501-c-3 charitable organization. As such, all funds must be legally used for what they are designated for. Neither Roxanne nor Jacque can pocket or use any of these funds, nor do they or anyone else take a salary from the non-profit, even though most NPO's pay out salaries to their directors and staff.

Here it should be noted that after a year of seeking and working with many script writers, both professional and otherwise, we were unable to find

anyone with the degree of sophistication as a writer as well as understanding of this subject who it was felt could do a sufficient job. To date, only two people have been paid for their attempts at this script, and one of them was not even paid out of the non-profit donations but instead, personally, out-of-pocket by Jacque and Roxanne. We would also like to mention that when this person gave us his fee for his honest effort, we paid him double the price he asked for.

The other individual, who is a professional scriptwriter, required a down payment and was paid that out of the non-profit funds. However, after he presented a portion of his script attempt, it was far from adequate to meet the needs of The Venus Project. At that point, we felt it was too urgent and we needed to get the script done. Therefore, we are writing the first draft ourselves. We are not taking and have not taken any money from the donations and we have no intentions of doing so. This leaves us with more money to go further with the project in terms of producing a budget for the film and anything else that may be needed to further interest and participation in the making of the film in order to get it accomplished. At some point, we may need a writer to polish off the script and we are open to that, if necessary.

The next falsehood we want to address in this article is as follows:

Another one of the Venus Project's amazing financial stunts was the world tour which I organized, as an unpaid volunteer, the Australian leg. I was pleasantly surprised when the Venus Project insisted on lowering the ticket price to \$30 from proposed \$40, and the Australian tour sold out in the 4 major cities, netting upwards of \$30,000 – after expenses, of which only 1 thousand was given to the Australian chapter in order to further promote the Venus Project. The Venus Project Tour took place in 18 countries, totalling more than 20 presentations^[10]. I do not know the total net earnings, but soon after the world tour, the Venus Project decided to take their property in Venus, Florida – a property comprising 10 buildings in which only Jaque Fresco and Roxanne Meadows live; the property which doubles as their research centre – off the market. This action indicates that the Project was no longer in the financial trouble that they had been in prior to 2010, and, as my partial intention in hosting the Venus Project in Australia was to provide some assistance for the Project to continue, I saw this as a positive result.

This is a grossly false impression as to what the entire tour brought financially to The Venus Project, along with the reason for taking the Research Center off the market. That is the trouble with this entire article; it makes many projections and false statements without having checked anything out. In actuality, we did not make any money from that tour. We paid for everything from the flights, hotels, food, advertising, many very expensive venues, etc.. One of the reasons for taking on the World Tour was indeed to help support the high operational cost of the center in Venus, Florida, where *four* people live. However, half way through the tour, we realized and accepted that we would not be making any profit at all and that certainly turned out to be the case. Still, being able to reach a larger audience was of huge importance to us and in this way, the tour was a success.

We did take our land off the market, but not at all for the reasons this Zeitgeist Movement national coordinator and spokesman is projecting. At that time, the US suffered a housing bubble 'burst'. The price of land had rapidly devaluated across most of the country, especially the state of Florida, plummeting so much that it did not pay to sell The Venus Project's property. If we had sold it then, we could not begin to build what we already have here, so we decided to try to hang on to it. To assume and state as fact that anyone who owns land is left with little or no operating expenses is at best, naïve.

While we feel that the entire article is a constant stream of bias, misinformation, and inaccurate statements, we did feel the need to address these specific and truly libelous areas of the article. We hope that all who are compelled towards the aims of The Venus Project take more time to learn about it to help avoid representing it incorrectly. These types of erroneous attacks are to be expected when presenting any new and innovative approach to social arrangements, but it is surprising for this to come from those professing to support a RBE when Fresco is originator of that term, its aims, and proposals.

The Venus Project